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State Drafts Anti-Smoking Plan

Health Dept. Seeks Curbs on Sales, Use

The State of California literally declared war on cigarette-smoking today on the basis of a Department of Public Health report which labelled the habit "a severe hazard to health" and recommended its complete abandonment.

In order to reduce smoking in California, the report proposed a four-point program including the following provisions:

1. More intensive education of professionals in the health and educational fields.
2. Stricter enforcement of the law prohibiting the sale of cigarettes to minors.
3. Removal of cigarette vending machines from public health and other health facilities.
4. Establishment of demonstration anti-smoking clinics.

RESTRICTIONS

The report, released in Berkeley by Dr. Lester Breslow, chief of the division of preventive medical services, said that the restrictions which would prohibit smoking in public places might help to curb the habit generally. It went on to say:

"The fervor of the 'Don't Spit' campaign in the hygiene of a half-century ago might be re-invoked against cigarette smoking."

56-PAGE REPORT

Based on studies made over the past 15 years, the 56-page report noted that "during the last 60 years, lung cancer has emerged from being a rare disease to one that caused 3530 deaths in California in 1961."

It is estimated that if the trend is not interrupted within another 60 years more than 100,000 California children now of school age will die of lung cancer before reaching 70.

Mortality from coronary heart disease was about twice as high among cigarette smokers as compared to non-smokers, the sharply critical review continued.

In addition to enforcement of its four-point program, the state health agency recommended that the Legislature raise cigarette taxes and restrict free cigarette distribution.

NO AD BAN

The report did not go so far as to recommend a ban on cigarette advertising but it did say that the department advocates "more careful work" with advertising agencies and other public information workers.

In answer to those who have attacked reports connecting lung cancer with cigarette smoking as being "unbiological" and "not proving a cause-and-effect relationship," the report asked poignantly:

"What can be more 'biological' than the life or death of a human being?"

NEWS-CALL BULLETIN
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Industry Disputes Breslow

The Tobacco Institute, Inc. took issue today with the California Public Health Dept.'s tough new report on cigaret smoking.

George V. Allen of Washington, D. C., president of the industry group, said in response to press inquiries:

"There is wide dispute among scientists as to the causes of lung cancer and heart disease. The proposals by Dr. Lester Breslow, who has been opposed to tobacco for some years, are not justified by current scientific knowledge."

"We believe the answers to these health questions will be found in the scientific laboratory, not through pronouncements."

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